THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The IAF has formulated a Modernisation Plan to enhance its combat aircraft strength in terms of quality as well as quantity. Plans are in hand to augment squardron force levels, for upgradation of existing fleet and for induction of force multipliers like UAVs. It would not be in the national interest to disclose further details.

Act off Sati committed by women in Madhya Pradesh

1533. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Act of Sati committed by a women in Samoti Patna village of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that there was not much social and official resistance to the outrange, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that worship of Satis and glorification of the act is still common in some parts of the country and helping to promote and sustain the practice, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what are the steps taken in the above case, so far alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) On 6.8.2002 at around 9.10 a.m., information was received in police Station Saleha distt. Panna through Ramadhar Chaurasia that a person called Mallu Sen, aged between 70-75 years of village Patna Tamoli died and his wife Smt. Kuttu Bai intended to commit sucide on the funeral pyre of her husban. On receipt of information, Station Officer of Saleha Police Station and one Constable reached the village with arms. Around 1000 people had already gathered near the cremation ground. The funeral pyre of Mallu Sen was burning at one end and Smt. Kuttu Bai stood near the funderal pyre. The people who gathered at the spot were provoking Smt. Kuttu Bai to sit on the funeral pyre of her husband. Station Officer tried to dissuade them from doing this. But they paid no heed to him and pelted stones at the Station Officer. Then they forcibly made Smt. Kuttu Bai sit on her husband's funeral pyre. Station Officer caught hold of Smt. Kuttu Bai's hand and tried to pull her out of the funerl pyre, but the crowd present there not only prevented him from doing so

but also assulted him. In the assault both the Station Officer and the constable sustained injuries. Smt. Kuttu Bai was forcibly made to sit on the funeral pyre of her husband as a result of which she died on burning.

(b) There was no apparent resistance from the crowd to this incident. However, Station Officer present on the spot tried to pull Smt. Kuttu Bai out of her husband's funeral pyre but the people present there assaulted him and prevented him from doing so and thus foiled his effort.

(c) No, Sir. The worhsip of Sati and glorification of the act is not common. Such incidents are rare and prominently condemned by the Government, Non-government organizations and the media. As per the records available in the national Crime Records Bureau, only one case was reported under Sati Prevention Act during 1997 in the State of Uttar Pradesh. No other State and UT reported any such case during last 5 years from 1997 to 2001.

(d) A criminal case No. 63/02 under section 302,201,120B IPC was registered at Police Station Saleha against thirty accused persons for forcibly making Smt. Kuttu Bai sit on the funeral pyre of her husband. In course of investigation, section 4(1)(2) G Sati Prevent Act, was also added to the case. The case has been charge sheeted on 30.9.2002 against the accused persons in the special court set up under the provisions of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 at Sagar.

In respect of assault on the station officer, another criminal case No. 62/02 under sections 307,147 and 332 of IPC was registered against ten persons. During investigation Section 4(2)(G) of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 was added and after completion of investigation a chargesheet has been filed in the special court at Sagar on 30.9.2002.

Air intrusion

1534. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:

SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently an unidentified aircraft intruded in Indian Territory in the North Bengal area and is reported to have dropped two parcels in Indian Territory;